

Faith and Inspiration

The Cure

On a regular basis, circumstances in life obligate many of us as individuals — and often as a society in general — to face an unsettling and vexing aspect of current human existence: mortality.

On a broad scale, the seemingly perpetual cycle of suffering manifested through war and violence, illness and disease (including the recent pandemic), and social and political unrest and upheaval reminds us that this world in which we currently reside is subject to so many forms of affliction and misfortune that can lead to our demise.

On a personal level, many of us must unfortunately contend with inevitable instances of these disruptive forces of chaos that seem to reign in our reality. Most everyone can ultimately recognize that at least on the surface, life can seem fairly fragile and ephemeral.

In an episode of the "Star Trek: Deep Space 9" television series, Doctor Julian Bashir faces an extreme medical crisis as he attempts to aid the inhabitants of a planet who were the targets of biological warfare. The severity of the situation is such that everyone in the population is now born with a purportedly incurable, deadly disease, and Doctor Bashir finds himself obsessively attempting to concoct a cure. He befriends a young woman named Ekorja who, despite lacking any medical training, compassionately and patiently attends to some of the afflicted while maintaining sober and realistic expectations.

BASHIR: I was watching you. You're very good with patients.
EKORIA: I was just trying to be kind.
BASHIR: Well, some people don't like to be around the sick. It reminds them of their own mortality.
EKORIA: It doesn't bother you?
BASHIR: Sometimes. I prefer to confront mortality rather than hide from it. When you make someone well, it's like you're chasing death off, making him wait for another day.
EKORIA: But death comes to everyone in the end.

The Bible affirms the volatile and perilous state in which humanity finds itself (Ecclesiastes 3:2, Ecclesiastes 7:2, Ecclesiastes 9:5, 2 Samuel 14:14, Psalm 82:7, Job 30:23, Hebrews 9:27).

It would probably not be an overstatement to assert the basically ill-fated nature of life as we know it.

The Bible also discloses that death is not merely the cessation of physical persistence. As with everything else, there is a spiritual dimension to death. Although some may be inclined to reduce it to a mere occurrence of matter decomposition and conversion to energy, Scripture extends the diagnosis of our adverse condition as being a general consequence of the underlying malady of our species: sin (Romans 6:23, 1 Corinthians 15:22). And this conception of death alludes to the truly tragic quality of that affliction of transgression: separation from God.

And so, as if to exacerbate our misery and heartbreak, the death that surrounds us and intrudes on our efforts to seek significance in life looms as a "memento mori" (Latin for "remember that you die") of not only the frailty of our physical frame but also the potentially dire fate of our innermost being. Before we conclude that fatalism or nihilism should be the order of the day, let us consider that God continues to desire fellowship and harmony with his creation, including us, the living souls uniquely fashioned in his image (Genesis 1:26-31, Exodus 29:46, Leviticus 26:11, Ezekiel 37:27, 2 Corinthians 6:16, Revelation 21:3).

Probably the most compelling aspect of grace as delivered through the life, sacrifice, and resurrection of Jesus is the fact of its initiative by God himself. As conveyed in Scripture, it would never be possible for us to make ourselves "worthy" or to "earn" God's favor (Romans 3:23, 2 Corinthians 3:5). God's desire to redeem creation from the fatal fallout of sin demonstrates his audacious, perhaps even desperate love for us.

Of course, there remain those of us



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who fail to acknowledge either the essence of this spiritual ailment called sin, or the source of remedy outside our own ability to diagnose this syndrome and prescribe a course of treatment. We may prefer to conclude, based on inadequate understanding, that either the disease does not exist or that there is no possible cure.

Later in the aforementioned episode of "Star Trek: Deep Space 9," Doctor Bashir expresses regret to his colleague, Jadzia Dax, over his failure to formulate a medical solution to the immediate effects of the pervasive plague. Dax attempts to comfort him but at the same time offer a reality check.

DAX: It's not a crime to believe in yourself, Julian.
BASHIR: These people believed in me and look where it got them. Trevean was right. There is no cure. The Dominion made sure of that. But I was so arrogant I thought I could find one in a week.
DAX: Maybe it was arrogant to think that. But it's even more arrogant to think there isn't a cure just because you couldn't find it.

In the end, Bashir is not able to cure those who are currently stricken, but he does manage to develop a vaccine for the next generation of children. He considers it a bitter



sweet solution. As it happens, we will indeed never be able to "cure" sin ourselves. It is so far beyond our capacity to devise a means of eliminating its scourge upon the world. As it also happens, this does not mean that there is no hope of respite or relief.

God would rather not have us suffer the sorrow and anguish that accompanies the hopelessness associated with sin and death. He has always had something much better in mind — abundant life with him (Ezekiel 18:32). God desires that we all should benefit from redemption through Jesus (1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9). In a kind of twist of irony, God's antidote for the death that originates from sin was in fact death — the death of Jesus as the permanent sacrifice demanded by the unbearable cost of sin. And as a demonstration of the ultimate panacea, Jesus was resurrected as a manifestation of the promise that the otherwise terminally lethal effect of the all-encompassing contagion of sin upon the human race has now been forever negated (Romans 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:26, 54-57; 2 Timothy 1:10).

To paraphrase the Bible, mortality has become immortality for those who embrace and embody the gospel of redemption. This is the definitive cure for what ails the human condition.

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Danny Reynolds celebrates 30 years at Palmer Trinity School



Danny Reynolds with Palmer Trinity School student delegates attending Round Square Conference in Canada. (from left) Alex Knoepfner '25, Rafael Morin '25, Sebastian Jaar '25, Danny Reynolds, Marcos Cano '25, Zachary Rodriguez '25. Palmer Trinity

Danny E. Reynolds, Associate Head of School, introduced the idea to the then Head of School and worked closely with similar schools in Sydney to set up the program. The student exchange semester abroad program has now expanded to include Spain, France, Chile and India. As the focus on global education has grown, and as part of the Global Round Square network of schools, Reynolds has taken students to conferences in India, South Africa, Germany, Argentina, Canada and the UK to meet with other students from over 250 schools in 40 countries.

"Danny is truly the lifeblood of our School," stated Patrick Roberts, Head of School. "His experience and robust leadership have kept our mission at the forefront and as a result we are proud of the esteem our institution enjoys."

Reynolds recently attended the Round Square Conference at Asbury College in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, on climate change in the arctic and indigenous people of North America, as a Round Square representative. He was accompanied by five student delegates from Palmer Trinity School. There were delegates from 20 countries in attendance.

After an inspiring trip

During his tenure, the school has seen a tremendous expansion from 300 students to 780 students. A strong advocate of global education, Reynolds also started PTS's study abroad program.

Said Reynolds, "During this time what has been most gratifying is the opportunity to foster positive relationships and impact the lives of students and families in our community."

Before coming to PTS, Reynolds worked in Admissions at both Florida International University and Georgetown University. While at Georgetown, he was head of admissions for abroad candidates—igniting a deep interest in global education.